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## REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RURAL-SCHOOL LIBRARIES

MARTHA WILSON, SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES, STATE DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION, ST. PAUL, MINN., CHAIRMANI. A STANDARD FOUNDATION LIBRARY FOR A  
RURAL SCHOOL(PREPARED BY HARRIET A. WOOD, SCHOOL LIBRARIAN, LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
OF PORTLAND, PORTLAND, ORE., AND WALTER BARNES,  
STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, GLENVILLE, W.VA.)

The committee has compiled a list of 122 titles because it seemed that a short list would be most helpful to the average country-school teacher. If he has no library, he can start one with this list better than with a longer one, since only the choicest books are given. If he has a small library, this list will surely suggest additions. If he has a large library, he will need a longer list than the committee can compile as a foundation.

Of the 122 titles, about 60 are "literature" books, 40 are "information" books for the children's reading, and about 20 are reference books, most of them suitable for both pupil and teacher. The fear that the price would prevent the purchase of important titles has led to the reluctant selection in some cases of inexpensive editions.

The books are graded according to the reading interests of children: one to three, primary; four to six, intermediate; and seven and eight, advanced. In general, all the children within a section will enjoy the same book. An exception to this rule is made in regard to the first-grade pupils. The mechanical difficulties of learning to read make it necessary to select books for them that third-grade pupils would consider too infantile. Younger pupils will listen with interest to older books if read aloud, and upper-grade pupils will find much of value in the simpler books.

## GENERAL

Author	Title	Publisher	Price
Bryant.....	How to tell stories to children.....	Houghton	\$1.00
Cabot.....	Ethics for children.....	Houghton	1.25
Champlin.....	Young folks' cyclopedia of common things, 3d ed.....	Holt	3.00
Champlin.....	Young folks' cyclopedia of literature and art.....	Holt	3.00
Champlin.....	Young folks' cyclopedia of persons and places, 6th ed.....	Holt	3.00
Evans and Duncan...	Farm life readers, vol. 4..... vol. 5.....	Silver	.45 .50
	Everyman encyclopedia, 12 vols., reinforced cloth.....	Dutton	8.00
Schauffler.....	Arbor day.....	Moffat	1.00
Schauffler.....	Christmas.....	Moffat	1.00
Schauffler.....	Thanksgiving.....	Moffat	1.00
Wallace.....	Uncle Henry's letters to the farm boy.....	Macmillan	.50
	World almanac (paper), edition for current year.....	Press Pub. Co.	.30

## BOOKS FOR FIRST GRADE

Author	Title	Publisher	Price
Blaisdell.....	Boy Blue and his friends.....	Little	\$0.40
Bryce.....	Child-lore dramatic reader.....	Scribner	.30
Free and Treadwell.....	Reading-literature: primer.....	Row	.32
Free and Treadwell.....	Reading-literature: first reader.....	Row	.36
Lucia.....	Peter and Polly in summer.....	Amer. Bk. Co.	.35

## FAIRY AND FOLK TALES, FABLES, MYTHS, AND LEGENDS

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
4-8	Aesop.....	Fables; selected by Jacobs.....	Macmillan	\$1.50
4-6	Andersen.....	Stories.....	Houghton	.40
4-6	Arabian Nights.....	Stories from the Arabian nights.....	Houghton	.40
4-6	Brown.....	In the days of giants.....	Houghton	.50
4-6	Carroll.....	Alice's adventures in Wonderland and Through the looking-glass.....	Grosset	.50
4-6	Collodi.....	Pinocchio.....	Ginn	.40
1-6	Grimm.....	German household tales.....	Jacobs	1.00
7-8	Hawthorne.....	Wonder-book and Tanglewood tales.....	Jacobs	1.00
4-6	Jacobs.....	English fairy tales.....	Burt	1.00
7-8	Kingsley.....	The heroes.....	Ginn	.30
4-6	Kingsley.....	Water babies.....	Dutton	.50
7-8	Lamb.....	Adventures of Ulysses.....	Heath	.25
4-6	Lang.....	Blue fairy book.....	Longmans	1.00
4-6	Mulock.....	Little lame prince.....	Heath	.30
1-3	Perrault.....	Tales of Mother Goose.....	Heath	.20
4-6	Pyle.....	Some merry adventures of Robin Hood.....	Scribner	.50
4-6	Ruskin.....	King of the Golden river.....	Heath	.20
4-6	Scudder.....	Book of legends.....	Houghton	.25
1-3	Scudder.....	Book of fables and folk stories.....	Houghton	.45
7-8	Stevens and Allen.....	King Arthur stories.....	Houghton	.40
4-6	Swift.....	Gulliver's travels.....	Heath	.30

## POETRY

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
7-8	Bryan.....	Poems of country life.....	Sturgis	\$1.00
4-8	Chisholm.....	Golden staircase. School ed.....	Putnam	1.00
1-3	Hazard.....	Three years with the poets.....	Houghton	.50
4-6	Lear.....	Nonsense books.....	Little	2.00
Ref.	Longfellow.....	Complete poetical works. Autograph ed.....	Houghton	1.00
7-8	Montgomery...	Heroic ballads.....	Ginn	.50
1-3	Mother Goose...	Mother Goose, illustrated by Kate Greenaway.....	Warne	.60
7-8	Shakespeare...	Merchant of Venice. Ben Greet ed.....	Doubleday	.60
1-3	Stevenson....	Child's garden of verses.....	Rand	.50
1-3	Waterman.....	Graded memory selections.....	Educ. Pub. Co.	.25

## STORIES

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
7-8	Alcott.....	Little women.....	Little	\$1.35
4-6	Aldrich.....	Story of a bad boy.....	Houghton	.50
7-8	Andrews.....	Perfect tribute.....	Scribner	.50
7-8	Blackmore.....	Lorna Doone.....	Crowell	1.50
7-8	Bunyan.....	Pilgrim's progress.....	Ginn	.30
7-8	Cooper.....	Last of the Mohicans, illustrated by Boyd Smith.....	Holt	1.35
4-6	Defoe.....	Robinson Crusoe.....	Jacobs	1.00
7-8	Dickens.....	Christmas carol and Cricket on the hearth.....	Macmillan	.25
4-6	Dodge.....	Hans Brinker.....	Grosset	.50
4-6	Egglesston.....	Hoosier school-boy.....	Scribner	.50
4-6	Greene.....	Pickett's gap.....	Macmillan	.50
7-8	Hale.....	Man without a country.....	Ginn	.25
7-8	Hughes.....	Tom Brown's school days.....	Harper	1.50
4-6	Page.....	Two little confederates.....	Scribner	1.50
7-8	Scott.....	Ivanhoe.....	Lippincott	1.50
4-6	Smith.....	Jolly good times.....	Little	1.25
4-6	Spyri.....	Heidi.....	Ginn	.40
7-8	Stevenson.....	Treasure island.....	Jacobs	1.00
7-8	Twain.....	The prince and the pauper.....	Harper	1.75
7-8	Twain.....	Tom Sawyer.....	Harper	1.75
7-8	Wiggin.....	Rebecca of Sunnybrook farm.....	Grosset	.50
4-6	Wyss.....	Swiss family Robinson.....	Jacobs	1.00
4-6	Zollinger.....	Widow O'Callaghan's boys.....	McClurg	1.25

## ANIMAL AND NATURE STORIES

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
1-3	Brown.....	Plant baby.....	Silver	\$0.48
7-8	Brown.....	Rab and his friends.....	Heath	.20
4-6	Eddy.....	Friends and helpers.....	Ginn	.60
7-8	Harris.....	Nights with Uncle Remus.....	Houghton	1.40
7-8	Kipling.....	Jungle book.....	Century	1.50
4-6	Kipling.....	Just so stories.....	Doubleday	1.20
4-6	Long.....	Wood folk at school.....	Ginn	.30
1-3	Potter.....	Tale of Peter Rabbit.....	Warne	.50
4-6	Seton.....	Lobo, Rag and Vixen.....	Scribner	.50
4-6	Sewell.....	Black Beauty.....	Jacobs	.30
4-6	Weed and Murtfeldt.....	Stories of insect-life, vol. 1..... vol. 2.....	Ginn	.25 .30

## ARTS AND SCIENCES

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
Ref.	Bancroft . . . . .	Games for the playground . . . . .	Macmillan	\$1.50
7-8	Barstow . . . . .	Famous pictures . . . . .	Century	.60
1-3	Beard . . . . .	Little folks' handy book . . . . .	Scribner	.75
4-6	Benton . . . . .	Little cookbook for a little girl . . . . .	Page	.75
4-6	Fairbanks . . . . .	Home geography for primary grades . . . . .	Educ. Pub. Co.	.60
7-8	Forman . . . . .	Stories of useful inventions. School ed.	Century	.60
Ref.	Griffith . . . . .	Essentials of woodworking . . . . .	Manual Arts Press	1.00
Ref.	Holden . . . . .	Real things in nature . . . . .	Macmillan	.65
Ref.	McGlaughlin . . . . .	Handicraft for girls . . . . .	Manual Arts Press	1.00
4-6	Miller . . . . .	First book of birds. School ed. . . . .	Houghton	.60

## GEOGRAPHY

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
4-8	Allen . . . . .	Industrial studies: Europe . . . . .	Ginn	\$0.80
4-8	Allen . . . . .	Industrial studies: United States . . . . .	Ginn	.65
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	Asia . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	Europe . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.70
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	How the world is clothed . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	How the world is fed . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	How the world is housed . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	North America . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Carpenter . . . . .	South America . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Chamberlain . . . . .	How we travel . . . . .	Macmillan	.40
4-6	Chamberlain . . . . .	South America . . . . .	Macmillan	.55
4-6	Chamberlain . . . . .	North America . . . . .	Macmillan	.55
7-8	Hall and Chester . . . . .	Panama and the canal. School ed. . . . .	Newson	.60
1-3	Shillig . . . . .	Four wonders: cotton, wool, linen, silk . . . . .	Rand	.50

## HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

Grade	Author	Title	Publisher	Price
7-8	Antin . . . . .	Promised land . . . . .	Houghton	\$1.75
7-8	Baldwin . . . . .	Abraham Lincoln . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
4-6	Baldwin . . . . .	Fifty famous stories retold . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.35
Ref.	Brown . . . . .	Epoch making papers in United States history . . . . .	Macmillan	.25
4-6	Egglesston . . . . .	First book in American history . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.60
1-3	Egglesston . . . . .	Stories of great Americans for little Americans . . . . .	Amer. Bk. Co.	.40
Ref.	Elson . . . . .	History of United States . . . . .	Macmillan	1.75
7-8	Franklin . . . . .	Autobiography . . . . .	Houghton	.40
Ref.	Gulliver . . . . .	Friendship of nations . . . . .	Ginn	.60
Ref.	Haskin . . . . .	American government. School ed. . . . .	Lippincott	.80
4-6	Pumphrey . . . . .	Pilgrim stories . . . . .	Rand	.45
7-8	Tappan . . . . .	Old world hero stories . . . . .	Houghton	.70
7-8	Warren . . . . .	Stories from English history . . . . .	Heath	.65

*II. TRAINING OF RURAL TEACHERS IN THE USE OF BOOKS*

DELIA G. OVITZ, LIBRARIAN, STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, MILWAUKEE, WIS.

The school library presents three problems: first, the organization and administration; second, the training of pupils to know and love good literature; third, the training of pupils in the effective use of books. The third of these problems should, I believe, be given first place in importance. While it is necessary for a large library to be cataloged, if a choice had to be made between a teacher who could catalog and one who knew books, I should unhesitatingly take the latter. Once teach a pupil to use books as tools and you have given him a good start on the road to knowing and loving good literature.

I have been asked to discuss the training which rural-school teachers should have in the normal school, county training school, agricultural high school, or teachers' training department of the high school that will enable him to train the pupils of the rural community in the effective use of books as tools.

In his essay on "Books and Libraries," James Russell Lowell writes with cheerful optimism: "All that is primarily needful in order to use a library is the ability to read." The phrase is so neat and so plausible that it is a pity that, for practical purposes, it is more likely to prove false than true—as false, let us say, as that knowing how to drive a nail is all that is necessary to make a good carpenter. As a matter of fact, there are a good many people who never have learned and never will learn even the rudiments of the art of using a library—that is, of so using it as to get from it just the special knowledge that they are seeking, and, what is more, getting it in a minimum of time. Lowell, of course, was speaking purely from the standpoint of the man of letters: he was thinking not of any one kind of library, public or private, general or technical, but just of libraries in the abstract.

But it is not at all in this sense that the phrase "how to use a library" is employed in the present paper. Our schools and colleges have kept pace with educational progress in almost every line of work except that of training pupils to find and use intelligently the material that is all about them. But it is never too late to learn. I quote from John Cotton Dana on the subject:

In our colleges and technical schools little is taught of the world of print, very little. Most colleges spend more on gymnasiums than on print, and far more on machines, chemicals, retorts, and dynamos than on any laboratory of printed things. This seems incredible but it is true. The printed record of man's thoughts and deeds in every field—nothing is more important in the world. How to use the world's accumulated knowledge down to and including what was learned and printed yesterday—no learning can be as important as that. Yet, this is not taught well in the colleges. It is not even in the curriculum, save in rare cases and in minute quantities. Of course, if the colleges do not teach all this, the graduates do not when they in turn become teachers in high and

normal schools; and, therefore, the common-school teachers, coming from the normal schools, do not; and, therefore again, the boy is not taught it when he goes to school; and, therefore, once more, when the boy gets into business, he does not readily learn that in the world of print must be the very information that will help him, that will shorten his processes, prevent foolish experiments, and guide him straight to the end he wants to reach.

If it is important that high-school teachers receive this instruction, it is a thousand-fold more important that the rural teacher receive it. The high-school teacher will usually have a well-equipped public library at her disposal; when questions come up which she cannot answer, she can turn her unsuspecting pupil over to the librarian. In the rural community, however, in which there is no other source than the school from which parents and children may secure information, it is most important for the teacher to have a broad knowledge of books, magazines, and pamphlets, and to know where to get all material on any subject that might come up for discussion either in the school or in the community. To too many teachers is the library of their own school a closed book. Teachers read, but many of them read for entertainment only. The teacher who goes into the rural community will find an intensely practical class of people, who as a rule read very little. It is her great privilege to bring to these farmers and their children the books that will make them better farmers—bulletins explaining how to make all farm operations more profitable—books that will make them masters of their problems. But all too often the teacher's training has not been such that she can render this service.

For the sake of getting at something definite as a basis for discussion, I have outlined a ten weeks' course in the use of books which I think should be required of every rural-school teacher: this has been tried out with success for several years:

First, a general talk on the importance of training in the use of books and on the scope of library work, with special emphasis on the helpfulness of a library in continuing the education of the individual; explanation of the scheme of classification showing the main classes with some of the subdivisions used in our library; study of the floor plan of the library with attention to the location of the different classes of books.

Then follows an explanation of the card catalog with the various forms of cards used; study and comparison of the dictionaries, encyclopedias, and special reference books; periodical literature, its value and importance; the value and use of the magazine indexes; public documents, value in school work, sources, methods of filing; children's books, what constitutes a good edition (paper, printing, binding, illustrations); the parts of a book, their uses, their position in the book, abbreviations used in books; helps in book selection; value of a course in reference work for the grades and high school.

Work is outlined for each grade, lesson-plans written, and practice in presenting the work is given.

Finally all the agencies that stand ready and willing to help the teacher, such as library commissions with traveling libraries, the university extension division with its package library designed to meet the demands of students along all lines, state libraries, experiment stations, and public libraries, are discussed. We have a traveling library at the school for the purpose of demonstrating the manner of obtaining the library, how it may be used, and how the books are charged.

In connection with this work, a rural-school library, not a model one, but a real one, is being cataloged. We are fortunate in being able to secure at any time a library in the county that needs cataloging; the county superintendent conveys it to our school. All the mending, labeling, accessioning, and cataloging is done by the pupils; this, I feel, is the very best practice possible. The "Township Library List" of our state is used as a textbook for this work.

So much for the outline. It is impossible in this limited time to go into detail as to the method of presenting the various topics. After each new subject is discussed, a set of problems is assigned the student; these problems necessitate the handling of the tools discussed. In the discussion of reference books, I invariably start out with a set of questions, the answers to all of which may be found in the dictionary. For example:

1. Who was Becky Sharp?
2. When did Bismarck die?
3. When was Oklahoma admitted as a state?
4. What is the meaning of the phrase, "Esprit de corps"?
5. What is the Monroe Doctrine?

I say to the class, "I do not care for the answers, but where would you refer a seventh- or eighth-grade pupil for the answer, should he ask you any or all of these questions?" The fact that not more than 10 or 15 per cent of the entire class ever receive a passing grade shows very clearly that the graduates of high schools are not familiar with the resources of the dictionary. The next day another set is given, to be reported on the following day, which probably necessitates the use of the *Statesman's Yearbook*, the *World's Almanac*, and possibly a book of quotations. Thus each day's work adds a new book of reference.

We endeavor to make our questions such that they dovetail into the work being done by the teachers in the other departments, in order that from the start the students may be able to see the practical value of the work. Sometimes the students are required to write up the answers, but more often only to name the sources; it is always the source that we emphasize. This is training that will make the student alert and able to stand on his own feet and answer his own questions for himself.

Sometimes the problems are all based on current events; again a set is given, "Who's who and why," consisting of a list of prominent men and women of the present day. Much interesting and amusing information

is brought here. For example, P. P. Claxton is a novelist, author of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*; William Chandler Bagley, keeper of curios, London; M. V. O'Shea, an Irish dramatist—all this and much more from high-school graduates. Plainly their education has not acquainted them with the men and women who are today doing constructive work in education.

When I am sure the students are fairly familiar with the resources of the dictionary, *Statesman's Yearbook*, *World's Almanac*, *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, *Brewer's Handbook*, the *Blue Book*, the *Reader's Guide*, and possibly two or three others, we begin to get acquainted with the reference books in the particular field in which the student is to teach. Those who intend to teach in a rural community are introduced to *Bailey's Cyclopedia of Agriculture* and *Cyclopedia of Horticulture*, yearbooks of agriculture, farmers' bulletins, publications of experimental stations, and a group of inspirational books such as Field's *The Corn Lady*, Carney's *Country Life and Country School*, Eggleston's *Hoosier Schoolmaster* and *Hoosier School Boy*, Grayson's *Adventures in Contentment* and *Adventures in Friendship*, and others adapted to the community needs and bearing upon the farm and the farmer, upon his occupations, his home, and his daily round of duties. Always we emphasize the fact that the teacher must study the community and be of practical service to the people in it. A set of questions similar to these is then given:

Where will you find material on:

1. How to raise alfalfa
2. How to build a silo
3. Rotation of crops
4. Sweet clover
5. Canning fruit
6. Tobacco-curing and marketing
7. Means of improving the soil
8. Spraying
9. Babcock test
10. Weeds
11. Birds of value to the farmer
12. Use of concrete on the farm
13. Good roads
14. Draining wet places
15. Poultry-raising
16. Bread and bread-making
17. Modern conveniences for the farm home
18. Preparation of vegetables for the table
19. Care of eggs

Some fifty or more subjects are listed, students suggesting subjects in which they are interested. After a general discussion as to possible sources for material, each student is asked to select any one of these in which he is the most interested and write a long theme on it, at the close of which he lists all the sources consulted. As much of this material is treated in public documents, the student begins to realize the value of these

publications and gets his first practical lesson in how and where to procure these documents, as well as other inexpensive reference material.

Rural-school teachers above all must become acquainted with the material which will enable them to keep their libraries up to date with the least expense. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the value of public documents, national, state, and municipal, the value of bulletins and monographs from educational institutions, and pamphlets from big manufacturing concerns. These last, while sent out as advertising, are valuable acquisitions to the small library. For example, the International Harvester Company sends out a little bulletin, *For Better Crops*, in which appear splendid chapters by experts on "Care and Protection of Farm Equipment," "Wheat Crop," "Corn Crop," and others. Another pamphlet by the same firm, called *Golden Stream*, gives the leading dairy breeds, tells how to care for dairy products, etc. Proctor & Gamble Company send out a bulletin on *Approved Methods for Home Laundering*, which is very valuable in a rural community where the laundering is done at home. Railroad and steamship guides are another valuable source. This is material which it will pay the teacher to know about. We supply students with mimeographed lists of such material which may be had for the asking.

Of course every teacher will not want all of the material we discuss. We always try to impress upon them the importance of getting acquainted with the farmer, of studing the community, and of knowing the needs, and always and forever trying to co-operate with agencies, which are already established, such as farmers' clubs, boys' and girls' clubs, of trying to forward the cause of good farming, and of being constantly on the alert to see what other teachers have found successful.

Frankly, if I were a rural-school teacher I should not be so much interested in whether or not a child read the classics, but I should be tremendously interested in finding out every child's hobby, whether it were poultry or orchards, bees or dairying, and, having found out, I should help him to all the books available on that subject, so that when he leaves school he may have enough interest and enthusiasm for that one thing to be able to make more of a success along that line than his father did before him.

If we want the library to be the great continuation school for boys and girls we must early acquaint them with its resources. Last winter I had the opportunity of working in a social-center library. At first the men and boys looked askance at the library and passed by the door to go to the poolroom, billiard-room, and any one of the several other activities in operation. Gradually, however, they began to drop into the library to look at the daily paper. We set about to discover the various occupations of these men and the next time they came in had books relating to their work for them to examine. In two short months we had between thirty-five and forty men coming regularly once a week for technical books. One

carpenter said to me, "I didn't know a library had books on carpentry, I thought they were all love story books." And another man said he had found out that the "library ain't only to brag about."

As soon as the teachers realize how tremendously the library can supplement and vitalize their teaching, the libraries in the rural school will grow and the right use of the material will follow.

How shall this training be given in the rural schools? The geography, history, and language classes offer splendid opportunities for the work. The opening exercises may be utilized. The old game of "stand up and spell down" may furnish the model on which to conduct an exercise in reference work. After a pupil has had the various tools explained to him he must learn to use them by being referred to them not once but many times. Let the teacher begin referring to them the first day of school and keep it up every day of the year.

We follow a hard-and-fast rule in our library: we never answer a question for a student that he can answer for himself. Many times when students apply for help and we are driven just at that minute, the easiest possible means of getting rid of them would be to answer their questions; but we want our students to have the ability to stand alone and help themselves when there is no one at hand to help them. Our question to an applicant for help is, "Where have you looked?" We do this to familiarize him with authors and get him out of the red, blue, and green book habit. Many times he is on the right track. If he is not, we set him aright by giving suggestions as to the particular book in which an answer might be lurking, and always we try to keep an eye on him until he has finally found the information desired. The next time a similar question comes up, it will be solved with less effort, and the next time almost automatically. The teacher will soon discover that these lessons are time-savers rather than time-consumers, and the pupils will be forming library habits which will hold them after their school days are over.

The teacher should be so thoroly saturated with her subject that the minute a question comes up she will know whether the card catalog, the reference book, or the magazine will be her surest source, and she should endeavor to transmit that power to her pupils. Many of you here have spent hours in searching for a bit of information you might have found in five minutes if you had been trained in school to know your tools.

Without this training, the librarian, teacher, and pupils are handicapped in their work and the library fails of its greatest usefulness. Such training is infinitely more valuable in later life than knowing a few textbooks from cover to cover.

My plea in closing is that rural teachers be so trained in the use of books that the rural library will be the true center of the community.

### III. COMMUNITY SERVICE FROM THE RURAL-SCHOOL LIBRARY

(PREPARED BY ELIZABETH B. WALES, SECRETARY, MISSOURI LIBRARY COMMISSION, JEFFERSON CITY, MO., AND T. N. CARVER, RURAL SPECIALIST, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Your committee approached the subject first from the point of individual service and endeavored to secure data for gauging the possibility of present service in the issue of books to adults in the community from the library of the school. To do this the old method of a list of questions was followed.

This list of questions was sent to the state superintendent in every state in the union and a supplementary request was sent to each library commission. Up to June 20 answers had been received from twenty-eight states. The tabulation of the returns showed most inadequate records of the rural-school libraries. Three superintendents frankly wrote that they had no records that would give the information. Many estimates were given and in states from which two reports were received the opinions of the library commission and state superintendent were frequently at variance. The states answering indicated that the rural problem as such exists largely in the northwest, middle-west, and southern states. Conditions on the Pacific Coast and in the northwestern states show special features which bear differently upon the problem of the rural-school library. (See appendix for tabulated statement.)

In answer to the question regarding the number of books in rural-school libraries suited to adult circulation, a percentage was shown, from one-tenth to one-half of the schools having enough books; out of twenty-one answers to the questions concerning the kind of books, only six believe the rural schools are likely to have the books needed; two say the books have been selected with too much reference to the adult reader (New York and Virginia). The question of management evoked twenty-three answers, twenty of which mentioned the teacher as the distributing officer. In most cases, it was held the teacher should do the work out of school hours. The common opinion seems to be that the school board would be justified by the opinion of the community in encouraging such work by the teacher; two states thought the board might object to such use of the school library (Missouri and South Dakota); two others thought the community opinion would not justify such work at present (Minnesota and Virginia).

On account of the small proportions of the answers received, your committee does not believe that satisfactory conclusions can be drawn from the questionnaire regarding the ability of the rural school to undertake the work. It appears, however, that the present condition of the rural schools does not fit them to be the center of this extension work if it is to be done efficiently. The constant tendency, however, to better the rural



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school, to secure a more permanent teacher for the rural school, as well as to develop the consolidated school for the rural district, holds out considerable hope for the future, and we hold the ideal condition in mind in making the following suggestions.

An effort should be made to develop this service from the rural-school library along definite community lines rather than in the direction of individual culture. Let the teachers get in touch with the county agricultural agent and the state college of agriculture. A good consulting committee might be made up of the county superintendent of schools, the county agricultural agent, and the secretary of the local farmers' association.

Get some of the free bulletins concerning agricultural problems. Gather the district school families at the schoolhouse and read from one of these bulletins of method. Cases have been known where much interest has been taken in such reading by those who heard it. Disagreement may be discovered and discussion may be encouraged. Often it is not the high railroad rates but the expense of hauling to the railroad station which produces the undue cost of transportation; often the farmer does not know what it costs him to raise crops. Questions like these will assist in withdrawing the attention of the community from the national questions to a consideration of its own economic welfare. Many a company of people will enjoy a book if it is read to them better than if they had to exert themselves to read it.

The organization of consolidated schools and county or township high schools forms an excellent nucleus for this progressive community work. Wherever possible an agricultural library should be collected under the supervision of the school and county agent.

Further work is suggested as follows: Select a few states that are now developing under the county agricultural agent and keep in touch with their experience.

From the state superintendent of schools learn the names of the county superintendents where community work is being done; ask the names of teachers whose schools are doing this work. Write for personal experience from these counties and schools.

We have plenty of individual instances where good service is done by the rural-school library. In each case the initial effort has come from the teacher or some progressive member of the community. Such work should be encouraged by all possible influence from outside but can better be done by local enterprise. L. H. Bailey has said, "I can picture to myself a rural library so alert as to give advice to its constituency where and how it may get in touch with new methods and discoveries." This is the ideal rural library for which we hope and toward which we work.